

EDITORIAL

JUST SO, COL. POPE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

COL. GEORGE POPE, the present President of the National Association of Manufacturers, is out with a signed whine. The Colonel says he cannot understand the reason “for the constant attacks of newspapers and individuals upon the integrity of the employing interests and especially the manufacturers”; and he asks: “What is there is business that calls for the wholesale denunciation of its most essential factors?”

Curious enough, immediately after he puts the question the Colonel answers it partly, yet is he not aware of hitting the nail on the head. “Business,” the Colonel explains, “in a broad interpretation of the word, means any activity conducted for profit.”

Just so.

And what is “profit”?

“Profit” is that portion of the wealth produced by the “employed interests,” that is, the Working Class, and sponged up by the “employing interests,” that is, the Capitalist Class. “Profit” represents “unpaid wages.” It goes without saying that where “profit” is made there must be a class that lives without producing, and a class that produces without living. The former is the “employing interests,” as Col. Pope styles the bunch, the latter is the “employed interests.” Accepting the Colonel’s definition of “business” as “any activity conducted for profit,” it follows that business is an activity conducted by the “employing interests” at the expense of the “employed interests.”

You may sponge upon some people all the time, and you may sponge upon all the people some time, but you can’t sponge upon all the people all the time. It is obvious that the process of sponging upon the Working Class, which the Colonel des-

ignates as business, has reached that acute stage when a considerable portion of the sponged resent being sponged upon. What more natural that when the limit has been reached the “worm turns”?

That Col. Pope is bewildered at the fact, despite the clearness of his perception as to what kind of activity “Business” is, only illustrates the psychologic fact that habit in mischief unsettles the mischief-maker’s thinking tank.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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